

How Do You Weigh Odds of Survival?

Name & Date _____

People evaluate the pros and cons of medical treatments in very personal ways. This explains why some people choose a treatment and others reject it. There is a question that helps to explain this difference: How much would you be willing to endure if your chance of regaining your current health was high? What if your chances of regaining health were low?

Answer the questions below to assess your willingness to take such risks.

Imagine that you are seriously ill. The doctors are recommending treatment for your illness, but the treatments may have side effects, such as pain, nausea, vomiting, or weakness. While pain and other side effects can usually be managed effectively, in very few cases, the side effects are difficult to manage. You may also experience social isolation and be prevented from seeing friends or family for extended periods of time. Question: Would you be willing to endure such severe side effects if the chance that you would regain my current health was:

(Circle one answer for each)

High (over 80%)	Yes	Not sure	No
Moderate (50%)	Yes	Not sure	No
Low (20%)	Yes	Not sure	No
Very low (less than 2%)	Yes	Not sure	No

This worksheet adapted by the American Bar Association’s Commission on Law and Aging from R. Pearlman, et. al., *Your Life Your Choices – Planning for Future Medical Decisions: How to Prepare a Personalized Living Will*, Veterans Administration Medical Center, Seattle, Washington.